

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 08310 171536Z

41

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O R 171500Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3139

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T JIDDA 8310

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PINS, ET, SA, SU

SUBJECT: KAGNEW 4; CISCO 2

REF: A) STATE 296570

B) KHARTOUM 2900

C) STATE 293655

D) JIDDA 7414

1. WE FIND IT DISAPPOINTING THAT A HIGH SUDANESE SECURITY OFFICIAL WOULD TELL THE BEARER OF PACKAGES FOR THE PLF PRISONERS TO TAKE THEM BACK TO JIDDA KNOWING THAT THEY ORIGINATED FROM THE US EMBASSY IN JIDDA. AS NOTED PARA 4 REF D, THE SAUDIS PLANNED ALL ALONG TO HAVE THE PACKAGES DELIVERED THROUGH THE SUDAN AFTER BEING TAKEN THERE ON AN AIRCRAFT TRANSPORTING RELIEF SUPPLIES TO ERITREAN REFUGEES IN THE SUDAN. CLEARLY, HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO COORDINATION BETWEEN THE SUDANESE AND SAUDI GOVERNMENTS ON THE QUESTION OF THE PACKAGES FOR THE PRISONERS.

2. WE CANNOT SAY WHETHER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES ARE EXTRA-SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 JIDDA 08310 171536Z

ORDINARY. AS WE NOTED REF D, WE HAD GOTTEN THE IMPRESSION

THAT THE PEOPLE THE SAUDIS WERE TALKING TO WERE NOT THOSE HOLDING CAMPBELL AND HARRELL PRISONER. SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATIONS WITH THE DIRECTOR OF AFRICAN AND ASIAN AFFAIRS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, AHMED SIRAJ, OUR MAIN CONTACT ON THIS MATTER, HAVE PROVIDED NO ADDITIONAL HARD INFORMATION BUT HAVE TENDED TO REINFORCE OUR IMPRESSION OF THE TENUOUSNESS OF ANY SAUDI CONTACTS TO THE PLF ON THE GROUND IN ERITREA (E.G. COMMENTS SUCH AS, "THOSE WITH GUNS IN THEIR HANDS DON'T EASILY TAKE ORDERS FROM POLITICIANS"). MOREOVER, SIRAJ TELLS US THAT HIS CONTACTS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO GIVE HIM ANY INFORMATION ON THE PROGRESS OF EFFORTS TO DELIVER THE PACKAGES TO CAMPBELL AND HARRELL.

3. WE AGREE THAT EMBASSY KHARTOUM SHOULD ATTEMPT TO PASS THE MESSAGES FROM THEIR FAMILIES (REF C) TO CAMPBELL AND HARRELL. WE THINK EMBASSY KHARTOUM SHOULD ALSO HAVE A TRY AT GETTING THE PACKAGES THROUGH TO THEM. AMONG OTHER REASONS, WE DOUBT THAT THE SAUDIS COULD GET THEM THERE BEFORE CHRISTMAS. WE WILL NOT, IN FACT, EVEN BE ABLE TO PASS ON THE MESSAGES UNTIL DEC 20 DUE TO THE ABSENCE FOR THE MOSLEM HOLIDAYS OF EVERYONE WHO WOULD BE WILLING OR ABLE TO PASS THEM ON.

4. WE WILL PASS ON TO THE SAUDIS WHAT WE UNDERSTAND TO HAVE HAPPENED TO THE PACKAGES WE GAVE THEM FOR DELIVERY. PERHAPS IT WILL GOAD THEM ON TO MORE STRENUOUS EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF THE PRISONERS (THERE HAS BEEN NO LACK OF GOOD WILL DESPITE MAJOR DISAGREEMENT WITH OUR POLICY TOWARDS ETHIOPIA.) IT MAY ALSO PROMPT THE SAG TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE SUDANESE GOVERNMENT WHEN THEY PLAN TO HAVE ERRANDS RUN ACROSS SUDANESE TERRITORY.
HORAN

SECRET

NNN

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